

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, January 31, 2001

The House met at 10 a.m.

Chaplain Steven Colwell, Army Reserve Readiness Training Center, Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, offered the following prayer:

Our most gracious Heavenly Father, we thank You for giving us this day, another day of life for us to cherish Your goodness and Your majesty. May we use this day seeking Truth and in so doing return it as our gift to You.

O Lord, bless these gathered here with Your wisdom. Guard them and guide them, O Father, and fill them with Your Presence. Bless their families and the staffs that labor by their side in government. May the laws enacted here conform to the Great Law that emanates from Your righteousness. I beseech You, Lord, to hear this prayer, prayed by a simple soldier, offered to You in the Name of the Prince of Peace. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LAMPSON led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

CHAPLAIN STEVEN COLWELL

(Mr. KIND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Speaker for the opportunity to say a few words about our guest chaplain today. I am proud that the inspiring words heard this morning came from one of my constituents, Chaplain Steven Colwell. He serves as staff minister at the Army Reserve Readiness Training Center at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin.

At Fort McCoy, Chaplain Colwell is the primary instructor on ethics and Army values training. In addition, he provides spiritual guidance and counseling to the more than 100,000 soldiers who come to Fort McCoy to train every year. The support that Chaplain Colwell provides to the military personnel and their families is invaluable. Chaplain Colwell has received numerous military honors, including the Army Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Kuwait Liberation Medal, and the South West Asia Service Medal with three Bronze Stars.

Chaplain Colwell has provided tremendous service to his community as well as our country. I am fortunate to have him as a constituent and pleased that he could share his inspiring words with us today. I thank Chaplain Colwell for being here today and for his service and dedication to our country.

APPOINTMENT AS INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule II, the Speaker, majority leader, and minority leader jointly appoint Mr. Steven A. McNamara of Sterling, Virginia, to the position of Inspector General for the United States House of Representatives for the 107th Congress, effective January 3, 2001.

MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

(Mr. WELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, let me ask a question of fairness and that is a pretty fundamental issue of fairness and that is, is it right, is it fair, that under our Tax Code that married working couples pay higher taxes just because they are married? Is it right, is it fair, that two working people, a husband and wife, both in the workforce,

pay on average \$1,400 more in higher taxes just because they are married, \$1,400 more than an identical couple that lives together outside of marriage?

I think we all agree that it is wrong that 26 million married working couples on average pay \$1,400 more just because they are married. It is called the marriage tax penalty.

I was proud that this House and the Senate last year sent to the President legislation with bipartisan support wiping out the marriage tax penalty for almost everyone who suffers it. Unfortunately, it fell victim to the President's veto. Well, we have an opportunity this year to eliminate the marriage tax penalty, an opportunity to work together in a bipartisan way and send to our new President, President Bush, who indicates he will sign into law our efforts to eliminate the marriage tax penalty, to get the job done this year.

I want to extend the invitation to my colleagues to join with us to eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

INTERNATIONAL ABDUCTIONS

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the first time to address the 107th Congress. Representing southeast Texas has been an honor and a privilege, and I look forward to two more years of service.

My grandson Nicholas joined me at the swearing-in ceremony this year and that was great; but unfortunately, there are many grandparents and parents who have not been so lucky and do not have the opportunity to share their lives with their children and grandchildren.

During my first year in office, I founded the Congressional Missing and Exploited Children's Caucus in response to the abduction and murder of a 12-year-old girl in Friendswood, Texas. The devastation felt by her family and the determination of the volunteers who searched for her inspired me to found this caucus, which includes 138 members and provides a loud and unified voice for missing children within Congress.

Mr. Speaker, as we begin the first session of the 107th Congress, I ask my colleagues who are not already members of the caucus to join me and to encourage those who are already members to continue fighting with me for